

# LIVING ORTHODOXY



## **Saint Geneviève of Paris: Life & Liturgical Service**

*Also in this issue...*

*St. Philaret: The Meeting of the Lord*

*St. Benedict Biscop: Life & Liturgical Service*

*St. John of San Francisco: The Last Judgment*

*St. Philaret: A Word on St. John the Baptist*

*The Synaxis of St. John the Baptist*

*Life of St. James of Kyros in Syria*

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# LIVING ORTHODOXY

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"You will say, how often have I prayed and I have not been answered. Because you have always prayed badly; either without faith, or with a distracted mind, or for things that were not expedient for you. And if at times you prayed for what was expedient for you, you did not persevere, for it is written: In your patience, possess ye your souls [Lk 21:19], and again: He who shall persevere until the end, the same shall be saved [Mt 10:22]. God sees into the hearts of those who pray. What need then, someone will say, that we should ask God what we need? Does He not know already what we need? Why then should we pray? God does indeed know what things we need, and with generosity provides all we need for the refreshment of our bodies, and since He is good He sends down His rains upon the just and the unjust alike, and causes His sun to shine upon the good and the bad [Mt 5:45], even before we ask Him. But faith, and the power of virtue, and the kingdom of heaven, these you will not receive unless you ask for them in laboring and steadfastness. We must first long for these things. Then when you desire them, you must strive with all your heart to obtain them, seeking them with a sincere heart, with patience and with faith, not being condemned by your own conscience, as praying without attention or without reverence, and so in time, when God wills, you will obtain your request. For He knows better than you when these things are expedient for you. And perhaps He is delaying in giving them to you, designing to keep your attention fixed on Him, and also that you might know that this is a gift of God, and may safeguard with fear what is given you. For what we come by with much labor we are zealous to defend, because losing it we lose all our labor, and treating lightly the gift of God we would become unworthy of life eternal."

— St. Basil the Great, †379 A.D.

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## **THE LIFE OF ST. GENEVIÈVE OF PARIS**

### **WHOM THE HOLY CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 3<sup>RD</sup> OF JANUARY**

St. Geneviève was born at Nanterre, near Mont Valerian on the outskirts of Paris, toward the middle of the fifth century, when the West was still Orthodox. Her father was Severus, and her mother Gerontia. When St. Germanus, bishop of Auxerre (comm. 31 July), was on his way to Britain to oppose the heresy of Pelagius, with his companion St. Lupus (comm. 29 July), they passed through Nanterre. The people went out to meet them and receive benedictions, in large companies. Amongst the children, St. Germanus observed the child Geneviève, and bade her be brought before him. The venerable bishop kissed the child and asked her name. The people nearby told him; as her parents came up, he asked "Is this little girl your child?" They answered in the affirmative. "Then," he said, "happy are ye in having so blessed a child. She will be great before God and, moved by her example, many will turn away from evil and incline to that which is good, and will obtain remission of their sins and the reward of life from Christ the Lord."

Then, after a pause, he said to Geneviève, "My daughter, Geneviève!" She answered, "Thy little maiden listens." Then he said, "Do not fear to tell me whether it be not thy desire to dedicate thy body, clean and untouched, to Christ as His bride?" She replied, "Blessed be thou, O father, for thou hast spoken my desire. I pray God earnestly that He will grant it to me."

"Have confidence, my daughter," said St. Germanus; "be of good courage; what thou believest in thy heart and confessest with thy lips, perform in work. God will add to thy comeliness virtue and fortitude."

Then they went to the church and chanted the ninth hour and vespers. Throughout the office, the bishop held his hand on the little maiden's head. That evening, after supper had been eaten and they had sung a hymn, St. Germanus bade Severus retire with his daughter, but bring her to him again very early in the morning. So when the day broke, Severus came back, bringing the child, and the old bishop smiled and said: "Hail, my daughter

Geneviève. Dost thou remember the promise thou didst make yesterday, about keeping thy body in integrity?" She answered, "I remember what I promised to thee, my father, and to God, that with his help I would preserve the chastity of my mind and the integrity of my body unto the end."

Then St. Germanus picked up from the ground a little brass coin with the sign of the cross on it, which he had observed lying there whilst he was speaking. He gave it to her, saying, "Bore a hole in this and wear it round thy neck in remembrance of me, and let not any other metal ornament, gold or silver or pearls, adorn thy neck or fingers." Then he bade her farewell, commending her to the care of her father, and pursued his journey.

It has been supposed by some that the command of St. Germanus not to wear other ornaments indicates that she was of wealthy parents, and thus they are inclined to doubt the common tradition of the place and the ancient Breviary, which say that she kept sheep for her father on the slopes of Valerian at Nanterre. But there need be no difficulty upon this point, for the sons and daughters of men of some position at that period were thus employed, and there was supposed to be nothing demeaning in such work. For instance, St. Cuthbert (comm. 20 March), though of noble lineage, kept sheep on the Northumbrian moors.

At the age of fifteen she was presented to the bishop of Paris, to be consecrated to the religious life. There were two other virgins with her and, though she was the youngest of the three, the bishop, moved by some interior inspiration, placed her first, saying that heaven had already sanctified her.

Upon the death of her parents she moved to Paris, where she was remarked for her sanctity and miraculous powers. When St. Germanus was once again on his way to Britain, he passed through Paris and asked after Geneviève. Certain envious persons tried to poison his mind against her; but he, despising their slanders, greeted her openly with great kindness, so as to testify before all the people how





highly he honored her, as he had done previously at Nanterre.

The influence exerted by this holy woman must have been very great, for she persuaded the Parisians to remain in the city, instead of fleeing into the countryside, when the hosts of Attila, king of the Huns, threatened it. Then she assembled the pious matrons and, with them, fasted and prayed, asking God incessantly, with many tears, to avert the scourge of the Huns from the city.

But a tumult arose, with many people saying that she was a false prophet, and that she would bring ruin on the citizens by dissuading them from escaping with their goods to places of greater security. A mob, headlong and cruel, came upon her to stone her or drown her in the Seine. They would have carried out their ferocious purpose had not her ancient friend and father in God, St. Germanus, stood by her in her extremity. He was then dying at Auxerre, and his thoughts turned to

the little girl he had consecrated to God in bygone years, in the humble church of Nanterre. Then he bade the archdeacon take her the *Eulogie*, or blessed bread, in token of his love and regard. [The custom of blessing bread and distributing it amongst the faithful prevails still in the French Church, as may be seen at any festival in a church of importance. This blessed bread is not to be confounded with the Holy Mysteries, of course. It is taken from the church in baskets, and is a sort of sweet-cake. This is a relic of the ancient Love Feasts or Agapæ (parallel to the Orthodox blessing of loaves at *litya* — *ed.*).]

The archdeacon arrived when the feeble woman was in greatest peril. He had heard the prophecy of St. Germanus of old. Running amongst the people, he showed them the *Eulogues* sent by the holy bishop and told them how highly he had venerated her virtues. Thus he appeased the multitudes and dispersed them.

The saying of the Apostle was fulfilled: "All men have not faith; but the Lord is faithful, Who shall stablish you and keep you from evil." For by the prayers of St. Geneviève the city was preserved, and the army of Alaric did not come near it.

St. Geneviève lived on a little barley bread and a few beans stewed in oil. But after she was fifty years old, at the command of the bishop, she also ate fish and drank milk.

Feeling a great reverence for St. Dionysius (Denis; comm. 3 Oct.), she greatly desired to build a church in his honor. One day she urged some priests to undertake the work. But they hesitated, saying they were not able to do so, giving as one reason that there was no means of burning lime. So St. Geneviève said, "Go, and cross the city bridge, and tell me what you hear." The priests left her and, as they passed over the bridge, they heard two swineherds in conversation. One said to the other, "Whilst I was following one of my pigs the other day, it led me into the forest to a large lime kiln." "That is no marvel," answered the other, "for I found a sapling in the forest uprooted by the wind, and under its root was an old kiln." Hearing this, the priests returned and told St. Geneviève what the swineherds had said. Rejoicing, she set the priest Genes over the work. At her instigation, all the



citizens assisted. She encouraged the workmen until the Church of St. Dionysius was built and roofed over. This incident is not a little curious, for it exhibits the fall and prostration of the arts at this period. Apparently, the science of building had been forgotten, and old Roman lime kilns had to be used because the Gauls, due to the incursions of barbarians and civil war, had lost the art of building them.

Childeric, though a heathen, had great respect for St. Geneviève. He was unable to refuse her when she requested him to spare the lives of his prisoners. On one occasion, when he was preparing to execute a large number of prisoners of war outside the city, he ordered the gates to be closed behind him, lest she follow him and obtain pardon for them. But when the saintly woman heard that the blood of so many men was about to flow, she hurried through the streets, overcome with compassion. Reaching the gates, she put her hand to them. Though locked and barred, they opened at the touch of charity, and she pursued the king. Falling down before him, she would not be comforted until she had obtained pardon for all those whom he had ordered to be executed.

After Paris was blockaded by the Franks, all in the neighborhood suffered greatly from famine, as the harvests had been destroyed and the country laid waste. Seeing that many died of want, St. Geneviève took vessels to Arcis; there procuring sufficient supplies, she returned with them to Paris.

Every Saturday night, she was wont to watch in prayer, that the Lord, coming in the Holy Mysteries of His day, might find His servant watching. One stormy night, as the Sabbath drew towards Sunday morning, and the cock had crowed, she left her home to betake herself to the Church of St. Dionysius, with the virgins who were her fellows. The lantern which was carried before her was extinguished by a puff of wind, and the maidens were frightened by the pitch darkness, the howling of the storm and the rain. The road was so muddy that, without a light, they could not pick their way. Then St. Geneviève took the lantern in her own hand, whereupon the candle lighted of itself within and, holding it, she entered the church.

She made several pilgrimages to the shrine of St. Martin at Tours (comm. 12 Oct.) in company with those holy women who lived with her and imitated her virtues. She died at the age of eighty-nine, probably in the year A.D 512.

She is venerated as the patroness of Paris. Her relics, tragically, were thrown into the Seine during the French Revolution, but the reliquary itself was later recovered and now rests in the Church of St. Etienne (Stephen) du Mont in Paris. In iconography and art she is often represented with a devil blowing out her candle, and an angel



STATUE AT HER RELIQUARY

rekindling it; sometimes, in old sculpture, the devil is provided with a pair of bellows. Sometimes she is seen restoring sight to her mother with the water of the well at Nanterre, or guarding her father's sheep; or, with the keys of Paris at her girdle, as patroness of the city; or holding bread in her lap; or with the well of Nanterre at her side.

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Adapted from S. Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, vol. I (January) [Edinburgh: John Grant; 1914]



**THE 3<sup>RD</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY**  
**FOREFEAST OF HOLY THEOPHANY**  
**COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE MOTHER GENEVIÈVE,**  
**PROTECTRESS OF PARIS & WONDERWORKER OF ALL FRANCE**

**AT VESPERS**

*On "Lord, I have cried...", 6 stichera: 3 of the forefeast (see in the Menaion); and 3 of the venerable one, in Tone IV Spec. Mel.: "Thou hast given a sign..."—*

Unto us, the faithful, hath the Lord given a wondrous sign: the venerable Geneviève, bride of the noetic Bridegroom, guide of virgins, counselor of kings and princes, mighty protectress of her city, who by her supplications doth repel the foe and dispel grievous pestilence.

Let us, O ye faithful, sing praises to the wondrous Geneviève; for as a maiden of tender years she willingly betrothed herself to Christ the Word and, brought to the temple of God, was consecrated unto Him, ever striving to be well-pleasing unto Him, all the days of her life.

Come, all ye faithful, and let us hymn the venerable one; for, beholding divine visions and possessing the gift of prophecy, with boldness she encouraged the people, urging them to be of good courage while the heathen armies besieged the city until, by her supplications, the danger passed.

*Glory...: Idiomelon, in Tone VI—*

Come, ye who love the saints of God, and let us praise Geneviève, the instrument of the Spirit, blessing her as a model of piety, a wondrous healer of our souls and bodies. And with wreaths of eloquence let us crown her, our intercessor, the radiant lamp of France, the clear-voiced clarion of divine discourse, the divinely wise seer of visions, the devoted daughter of the all-pure Mother of God; and let us cry out to her thus: Rejoice, O unblemished ewe-lamb! Rejoice, O thou who leadest us to the knowledge of God! Rejoice, boast of the great city of Paris! Rejoice, adornment of all Gaul and glory of Christendom!

*Now & ever..., of the forefeast (see in the Menaion)*

*Aposticha stichera of the forefeast (see in the Menaion), and Glory...: Idiomelon of the venerable one, in Tone II—*

The powers of darkness were rendered impotent! The wiles of Satan were set at naught! The hordes of ungodly Attila withdrew. The savage Franks were rendered meek; and the precious Cross triumphed when dread Clovis descended into the grace-filled font, won for Christ by the preaching of the holy Geneviève, whom we, her children in the Faith, ever praise with hymns as is meet.

*Now & ever..., of the forefeast (see in the Menaion)*

*Troparion of the saint, in Tone I—*

Shepherds who tended their flocks once beheld Christ our Savior; and thou, O godly maiden, as a shepherdess pure of heart, didst worship the Great Shepherd of the reason-endowed sheep. Fend off the wolves that come in sheep's clothing to devour us, and in thy love lead us to the pastures of heaven, O venerable mother Geneviève.

*Glory..., Now & ever...: Troparion of the forefeast (see in the Menaion)*

**AT COMPLINE**

*We chant the triodion of the forefeast from the Menaion.*

**AT MATINS**

*At "God is the Lord...", the troparion of the forefeast, twice; Glory..., that of the venerable one; Now & ever..., that of the forefeast, once.*

*Canon of the forefeast, with 8 troparia, the irmoi being chanted twice; and that of the venerable one, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "Holy Geneviève still protecteth Paris", in Tone II—*

### ODE I

*Irmos:* Let us sing unto the Lord a new song; for—awesome wonder!—the Virgin hath given birth to God incarnate, and remained a virgin even after giving birth.

Hymns and spiritual songs let us offer unto the Lord, for in His compassion He hath given Geneviève as a protectress unto Paris, and unto us a mighty aid.

O holy mother, great was thy zeal for fasting and abstinence, great thy dedication to virginity, great thine acquisition of the virtues, great thy love of God.

Let us praise Geneviève as a mighty warrior; for she confronted the conqueror Childeric with boldness, demanding the lives and freedom of Christians.

*Theotokion:* Ye faithful, let us sing a new song unto the Virgin who hath given birth unto our incarnate God, Who is coming to be baptized of John in the River Jordan.

### ODE III

*Irmos:* My heart is established in the Lord. My horn hath been uplifted in my God. For Thou wast born on earth and hast saved me, who have gone astray.

Germanus the holy hierarch perceived in thy heart a pure love for God, and he blessed thee and counseled thee to preserve thy virginity unsullied.

Even as a child of seven years thy soul shone within thee with the light of grace divine, so that the saints beheld it and were uplifted in spirit.

Nanterre is blessed as the place of thy birth, and Paris as the place of thy dwelling, both in life and after; wherefore, they extol thee, O Geneviève.

*Theotokion:* Establish thou our hearts upon the rock of faith, O Mother of Christ our God, Whom John prepareth to immerse in the Jordan for our salvation.

*Kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone II—*

Out of love for the Lord thou didst suppress the desire to rest, O venerable Geneviève, making thy spirit radiant through abstinence. Wherefore, thou didst tame wild beasts by thy power, and by thy supplications thou didst put down the uprisings of the enemy.

*Sessional hymn of the venerable one, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: “Awed by the beauty of thy virginity...”—*

Awed by the purity of thy virginity and greatness of thine ascetic feats, marveling, we cry out to thee, O Geneviève: By thine entreaties deliver us from the dangers that beset us in these perilous times, for vile heresies abound that threaten our souls, and we are hard pressed to evade them; but come thou to our aid, O venerable mother.

*Glory..., Now & ever...: Sessional hymn of the forefeast (see in the Menaion).*

### ODE IV

*Irmos:* Without the aid of men’s hands Thou wast cut as a stone from the mountain of the Virgin Mother, O Christ; wherefore, the prophet, foreseeing this, cried aloud: Thou hast come for the salvation of Thy people! Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

Virgin didst thou remain thy whole life, O venerable one, for thou didst promise thy maidenhood to the heavenly Bridegroom; wherefore, He gave thee the gifts of foresight and prophecy, that all might cry: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

In time of war, when barbarian hordes laid siege to Paris, the people grew faint of heart and would fain have fled their homes; but thou, O saint, didst give them courage by thy visions and words, and the godless ceased their assault and withdrew.

Even in times of peace thou didst relate the things of the future to thy compatriots, O holy one; but, displeased with thy words and thine ascetic feats, the people would have drowned thee in the Seine; but the holy Germanus protected thee from afar.

*Theotokion:* Virgin thou wast before giving birth to Christ, O Mother of God; virgin wast thou while giving birth; and ever-virgin art thou for eternity. Wherefore, the faithful worship Him Who was born of thee, crying: Glory to Thy power, O Lord!

### ODE V

*Irmos:* The Sun — the live Coal, which was revealed beforehand to Isaiah — shone forth from the Virgin’s womb, granting the enlightenment of divine knowledge to those gone astray in darkness.



Entrusted by the bishop with the oversight of maidens who had promised their virginity to Christ, O Geneviève, by thy piety and faith thou didst set them a good example to follow.

Severus and Gerontia, thy parents, as devout Christians reared thee in the Holy Faith, O holy mother; and Germanus and Lupus, the venerable hierarchs, blessed thy goodly intent.

The Franks of Childeric surrounded thy city, O venerable one, and hunger walked its streets; but, right boldly, thou didst take boats to Troyes and bring back grain to feed the starving.

*Theotokion:* In thy virginal womb, as in a golden censer, the Word of God burned like a live coal, yet did not consume thee; and He cometh now to the Jordan to enlighten us with knowledge divine.

#### ODE VI

*Irmos:* O Lord, disdain not the entreaty of Thy servants, which they offer from the depths of their hearts; but as Thou didst bring the Prophet Jonah forth from the belly of the sea monster, so save us from the noetic and soul-destroying beast.

Leave us not bereft of protection, O saint of God, but never cease to offer up entreaty for thy servants; for the ship of our souls hath foundered upon the sea of life, and if thou wilt not speedily aid us the noetic beast will devour us.

Let us offer praises to the venerable Geneviève, crying out from the depths of our hearts: O our mighty protectress, preserve us by thine earnest supplications, and beseech Christ thy Bridegroom to take pity on us and to save our souls

Prophecies didst thou utter to lead the people to repentance, and visions didst thou behold to guide them to the knowledge of God, O mother; wherefore, instructed by thee, they were able to elude the predations of the noetic beast.

*Theotokion:* Redeemer and Savior of the lost, Christ Jesus approacheth the river's streams, that entering therein He might tread the heads of the soul-destroying serpent underfoot, saving mankind from its venomous sting, through which death befell us of old.

*Kontakion & ikos of the forefeast (see in the Menaion).*

#### ODE VII

*Irmos:* That Thou mightest manifestly prefigure Thine all-glorious nativity from a virgin, O Christ, in the furnace Thou didst preserve unconsumed the youths who chanted to Thee in hymns: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

O the magnitude of thy holiness, O saint! For from the heights of his pillar the great Symeon beheld thee resplendent with grace divine, and sent emissaries to thee, begging thee to pray for the salvation of his soul.

The report of thy sanctity spread the world over, and multitudes journeyed to see and converse with thee, seeking solace and pious counsel, O Geneviève; and, edified, they cried: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

Excelling in fasting and ascetic endeavors for the love of God, O holy one, to these thou didst add almsgiving and works of mercy for the love of thy neighbor; and thus thou didst swiftly ascend the ladder of the virtues.

*Theotokion:* Christ Emmanuel, God with us, entered ineffably into the Virgin's all-pure womb, and, taking flesh thereof, He issued forth all-gloriously, to save all who lift up their voices unto Him, chanting: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou!

#### ODE VIII

*Irmos:* Creation is seen to be fire, and those who before were in darkness to be children of the light. The prince of darkness alone groaneth. Let the inheritance of all the nations which before was accursed now fervently bless Him Who hath brought these things to pass!

Thou didst burn with heartfelt love for thy Creator, and thus, like a pillar of fire amid the darkness of this world, thou didst guide the people through the wilderness to the promised land of paradise, where they rejoice with thee and all the saints, O Geneviève most good.

Ever armed with the virtues, as the full armor of God, thou didst repel the burning darts of the prince of darkness, the father of lies, O venerable one; and thus unharmed by his malice, thou didst put him to headlong flight, and standest firm, undaunted by his malice.



The holy Martin, bishop of Tours, welcomed thy pure soul to the mansions of heaven, O mother; for thou didst lead the virgins entrusted to thy care on pilgrimage to his tomb, a radiant lamp of the grace of God, that they might partake thereof and bless his memory.

*Theotokion:* He Who separated light from darkness and fashioned man out of the dust of the earth, is born of the Virgin and now draweth nigh to the Jordan, that therein He might bring to pass the salvation of those before condemned to sit in darkness and the shadow of death.

#### ODE IX

*Irmos:* O ye faithful, in unceasing hymnody let us magnify her who supernaturally conceived in the flesh of her womb the Word Who shone forth from the Father before time began.

Peter and Paul, the great apostles, welcomed thee to paradise, O Geneviève; for, cherishing their holy memory, thou didst prevail upon the king to dedicate a fair temple in their honor.

All Christians hymn the glorious Geneviève unceasingly, honoring with her the holy Queen Clotilde: for together they converted the heathen Franks to the worship of Christ the Word.

Right piously let us magnify the revered Geneviève, the devout handmaid of the Word of the Father, who by His power hath unceasingly wrought countless signs and wonders.

In repentance let us all fall down, imploring the holy one, our heavenly protectress, to beseech the all-holy Trinity to forgive our manifold offense and transgressions.

*Theotokion:* Sing ye now exalted hymns, O ye faithful, magnifying her who, past all understanding, gave birth to the Word of God, Whom the unoriginate Father doth eternally beget.

*Exapostilarion of the venerable one: Spec. Mel.: "Hearken, ye women..."—*

Geneviève rejoiceth in heaven, joining chorus with all the holy women there assembled; for in boldness she was like Deborah, Judith and Esther of old, and in piety she imitated the venerable women ascetics of the desert. Wherefore, haste ye and give her praise.

*Glory..., Now & ever...: Exapostilarion of the forefeast (see in the Menaion)*

*Aposticha stichera of the forefeast (see in the Menaion), and Glory...: Idiomelon of the venerable one, in Tone V—*

O Paris, thou city of light, rejoice and be glad; for today is celebrated the splendid memory of Geneviève thy protectress, the peer of the holy women of old, the preacher of the Gospel, the beholder of visions divine, the ward of holy hierarchs, thy bold champion and mediatress, the seer who foretold the future, the mother of the poor and guardian of maidens! And honoring her, with us cry aloud: O Christ God, by the supplications of Thy holy one establish Thy Church in peace!

*Now & ever..., of the forefeast (see in the Menaion)*

#### AT LITURGY

*Prokimenon, in Tone IV—*

Wondrous is God in His saints, the God of Israel.

*Stichos:* In congregations bless ye God, the Lord from the wellsprings of Israel.

#### EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, §208

Brethren: Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

*Alleluia, in Tone I—*

*Stichos:* With patience I waited patiently for the Lord, and He was attentive unto me, and He hearkened unto my supplication.

*Stichos:* And He brought me up out of the pit of misery, and from the mire of clay.



The Lord spake this parable: "The kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made: 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.' Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise: 'Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.' But the wise answered,

saying: 'Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying: 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But he answered and said: 'Verily I say unto you, I know you not.' Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

*Communion verse—*

In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be;  
he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.

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*Service composed in English by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen, with the exception of the troparion and kontakion, which he has reworked from existing texts. Copyright © 2008. All rights reserved by the author.*

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## THE FEAST OF THE MEETING OF THE LORD

*St. Philaret of New York*

When our Lord Jesus Christ was carrying out His task, the salvation of the human race, He walked along the fields and roads of the Holy Land, Palestine, bringing the glad tidings, performing miracles and healings. He states several times "do not think that I came to destroy the law; I came not to destroy the law but to fulfill it." Furthermore, the holy fathers indicate that these words of His have a dual meaning. First of all, He came in order to "fulfill", to bring to completion the old testament Law. In this sense the Slavonic word translates into Russian as "make replete" — to make it complete. At the same time, He Himself was the executor of that law which was given to Moses; in other words, He was the One who carried out His law, giving an example to all the faithful of how this law must be carried out.

You have probably read in the Gospel how the Lord once said: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass" (cease to exist) "than for one tittle of the law to fail" — that is, not a single comma of the law shall disappear from the law, nor not be fulfilled, until all of it is fulfilled.

And so on today's feast, when the Church sings "The Unoriginate Word of the Father, having taken His beginning from the Virgin, as a forty-day



old infant is brought by the Virgin Mother into the lawful church, and the elder receives Him into his



arms” — the Lord gives us an example of the fulfillment of the law.

The aged elder Simeon, who according to the Gospel was so righteous and pious that the Holy Spirit dwelt within him — came by the beckoning of the Spirit into the Temple of the Lord and, seeing the Infant, received Him into his arms.

The Church speaks on behalf of the tiny Infant, Who was carried in the arms of the Most Blessed Virgin Mother and Whom the elder Simeon received into his trembling arms: “It is not the elder who holds Me, but I hold him, and it is he who asks Me for permission to depart.” For Elder Simeon, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, knew that this small Infant Who lay in his arms was the Master of all creation. Therefore he addresses Him: “Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace O Master, according to Thy word.”

And so it was with peace that the righteous elder was departing from this world.

But we know that while departing in peace, he revealed a disquieting prediction to the one from whom he had received the most holy Infant. For, in addressing the most blessed virgin Mary, the righteous Simeon says, prophesying to her, that the time would come when a sword would pierce her heart — that is, she would have to endure such an enormous grief as cannot be conveyed in any other words; the suffering and grief, which like a weapon, like a sword would penetrate her most holy and blameless soul. And, according to Church tradition, the most holy virgin Mary herself said, after hearing the prophesy of Saint Simeon, although there were joyous and bright moments in her life, that she always anticipated this terrible prophesy. But she only completely understood this prophesy when she finally stood at the cross of her Son, being crucified in her maternal heart together with Him.

But blessed was the righteous elder, who could say that he was departing with peace. It is rarely stated in the Bible regarding the Old Testament God-pleasers that they possessed the Holy Spirit, but this is said of Righteous Simeon. It is also

known from Church tradition that he was an aged elder who reached deep old age, having long passed the threshold of the usual human lifespan. For he was already aged when, 270 years before the nativity of Christ, he was translating the book of Isaiah; when he came upon the words “a Virgin will receive in her womb and bear a Son, and His name will be Emmanuel,” he decided that this was a mistake and wanted to erase the word “Virgin” and replace it with a word signifying “a married woman” (since she was to receive in Her womb and give birth to a son). But the angel held back his hand and said: “Believe the written words and you will see their fulfillment.” And so the elder believed and throughout his entire life he burned ardently with this faith. 270 years! How long he waited! How many generations passed before his eyes; they were born, grew up, grew old and died, yet he lived and burned ardently with his powerful faith. And finally all the predictions of the angel come to pass — and he receives the Creator of All into his aged arms.

This example of the holy life of righteous Simeon, owing to his unusual longevity, bears of course a special character.

But one must remember that each person must desire for himself such a God-pleasing, peaceful end, as the one which Elder Simeon experienced then, and of which he speaks in his final prayer.

For you and I constantly pray at every service: “for a Christian ending to our life, painless, blameless, peaceful...” Of course, this is how we all pray, but due to external circumstances, we die in different ways. Only the Lord knows what death to send to whom, and when to cut the thread of human life, and extinguish that beacon of life which He had lit. Only He Himself knows when it should be extinguished; but in any case, the repose of the righteous Simeon should remind us of our own repose. May the Lord grant that each one of us receive from God such a repose, even if it is not painless (for sometimes final illness sanctifies and enlightens a person), but in any case a blameless and peacefully Christian end. Amen.

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*Translated from the Russian by Evgenia Chisholm*

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**THE LIFE OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER BENEDICT BISCOP,  
ABBOT OF WEARMOUTH AND JARROW  
WHOM THE HOLY CHURCH COMMEMORATES ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY**

Benedict was born of the highest Anglo-Saxon nobility in the year A.D. 628. While he was still very young, he held an office in the household of King Oswy. At twenty-five he gave up secular life, marriage, and his family, restored his lands to the king, and dedicated himself to the service of God.

Before he settled in any community, he went to Rome, whither he had been long attracted by that desire of praying at the tomb of the apostles, which became so common amongst the Anglo-Saxons. He started in company with St. Wilfrid (comm. 12 Oct.), but the two Northumbrian nobles parted company at Lyons. After his first visit to Rome, Benedict returned thither a second and third time, having in the meanwhile taken on the monastic habit in the island of Lérins. Struck with the piety and knowledge of so constant and zealous a pilgrim, Pope Vitalianus assigned to him, as guide and interpreter, that Greek, Theodore, who became Archbishop of Canterbury. The pope assigned St. Benedict to conduct the newly-consecrated archbishop, and his companion St. Adrian (comm. 9 Jan.), to England. He was then appointed abbot of the Monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul at Canterbury, but after two years resigned the dignity, that he might again visit the shrines of the apostles in Rome.

After spending two years with the new archbishop, Abbot Benedict, instead of revisiting his native district, went for the fourth time to Rome, in A.D. 671. He was then in the prime of life. When it is considered what were the difficulties and dangers of such a journey, at such a time; when we remember that a journey from London to Rome then took twice as long as, and was a hundred times more dangerous than a journey from London to Australia is now (this written before air travel! — *ed.*) — we are amazed at the energy which led so many Anglo-Saxon monks, not once only, but many times in their life, to cross the sea and the Alps on their way to Rome.

Benedict's fourth expedition was undertaken in the interest of literature. He brought back a

cargo of books, partly sold, partly given to him. Passing by Vienne, the ancient capital of the Gauls, on his return, he brought with him many more which he had deposited there in the care of his friends. When he returned at length to his native Northumbria, he sought out King Egfrid, son of his former master, Oswy, then the reigning monarch, and told him all that he had done during the twenty years which had passed since he had left his country and royal service.

Endeavoring to communicate to him the religious ardor with which his own heart was filled, he explained to the king all he had learned at Rome and elsewhere, of ecclesiastical and monastic discipline, and showed him the books and relics which he had brought back. Egfrid, who had not yet begun his struggle with Wilfrid, allowed himself to be won by the stories of the pilgrim, for whom he conceived a great affection. In order that St. Benedict might apply his experience to the government of a new community, the king detached from his own possessions and presented to the saint an estate situated at the mouth of the Wear, a little stream which flows through Durham and empties into the North Sea a little south of the Tyne [Monk-Wearmouth on the north bank of the river]. This gave the name of Wearmouth to the new monastery, dedicated to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, in accordance with the express wish of Egfrid, and in agreement with that of St. Benedict, as an evidence of his leanings towards Rome.

This foundation was no sooner assured, than the unwearied Benedict took ship again, to seek in France masons to build him a stone church in the Roman style, for everything which came from Rome was dear to him. The church was carried on with so much energy that, a year after the first stone was laid, the church was roofed in, and the holy liturgy celebrated under one of those stone arches which excited the surprise of the English in the seventh century.



He also brought glass-makers from France, for there were none in England. These foreign workmen, after having put glass into the windows of the church and new monastery, taught their art to the Anglo-Saxons. Animated by a zeal which nothing could discourage, and inspired by intelligent patriotism and a passion for beauty in art which shrank neither from fatigue nor care, he sent to seek beyond the seas all which he could not find in England — all which seemed necessary to him for the ornamentation of his church. Not finding even in France all that he wanted, he went for a fifth time to Rome.

Even this was not his last visit, for some years later he made a sixth pilgrimage. On both occasions he brought treasures back with him, chiefly books in countless quantities, and of every kind. He was a passionate collector, as has been seen, from his youth. He desired each of his monasteries to possess a great library, which he considered indispensable to the instruction, discipline and good organization of the community. He considered the books the best means of keeping his monks in their cloisters — for, much as he loved traveling himself, he did not approve of other monks passing their time on the highways and byways, even under pretext of pilgrimages.

Along with the books he brought a great number of pictures and colored images. By introducing these images from Rome to Northumberland, St. Benedict has written one of the most curious and, at the same time forgotten, pages in the history of art. The Venerable Bede, who speaks with enthusiasm of the expeditions of his master and friend, leads us to suppose that he brought back with him only portable pictures. But it may reasonably be supposed that the abbot of Wearmouth brought back with him both painters and mosaic-workers, to work on the spot at the decoration of his churches. How can it otherwise be explained, how pictures on wood, brought even by water from Rome to England, should have been large enough to cover the walls and arches of the two or three churches of which Bede speaks?

However this may be, the result was that the most ignorant of the Christians of Northumbria found, on entering these new monastic churches,



under material form, the attractive image of the instructions which the monastic communities lavished upon them. Learned and unlearned could contemplate and study with delight, we are told — here, the sweet and attractive form of the new-born Savior; there the Twelve Apostles surrounding the Blessed Virgin. On the northern wall were all the parables of the Gospel; upon the southern, the visions of the Apocalypse. Elsewhere, there was a series of pictures marking the harmony between the Old and New Testaments: Isaac carrying the wood for his sacrifice opposite Jesus bearing His Cross; the brazen serpent opposite Jesus crucified, and so on. All these Bede, who had seen them, describes with great delight [Bede: *Vita Abb. in Wiramuth*, ch. 6].

After Greek and Latin books, after art, it was the turn of music. On his return from his fifth voyage, St. Benedict brought back with him from Rome an eminent monk named John, precentor of St. Peter's, to establish at Wearmouth the music and Roman ceremonies with great exactitude. As soon as he had arrived at Wearmouth, this learned abbot set out in writing the order of the celebration of all feasts for all the year, of which he soon circulated numerous copies. Then he opened classes at which he taught, *viva voce*, the liturgy and ecclesiastical chants. The best singers of the Northumbrian monasteries came to listen to him, and invited him to visit their communities.

His passionate zeal for the building and decoration of his monastic houses did not make St. Benedict forget the more essential interests of his foundations. Before leaving Rome, he took care to constitute his community upon the immutable basis of the Rule of St. Benedict [of Nursia]. He obtained from Pope Agatho a charter which guaranteed the liberty and security of the new monastery of Wearmouth. In order to give St. Benedict a new mark of sympathy, King Egfrid assigned to him another estate, near the first. This was the cradle of the monastery of Jarrow, the name of which is inseparably linked with that of Bede. This monastery he dedicated to St. Paul, and appointed one of his most intimate friends and fellow pilgrims, Ceolfrid, abbot of the new foundation.

In order to be more at liberty to devote his time to travel, St. Benedict took a coadjutor in the government of Wearmouth. This new abbot was his nephew Easterwin, his junior by twenty-two years and, like himself, of high birth. The noble youth took pride in following minutely the rule of the house, like any other monk. Thanks to his illustrious biographer, we know what were the occupations of a Saxon thane turned monk in the seventh century. His duties were to thrash and winnow the corn, milk the goats and cows, take his turn in the kitchen, the bakehouse and the garden, always humble and joyous in his obedience.

When he became coadjutor and was invested, in St. Benedict's absence, with all his authority, the young abbot continued the course of communal life. When his duties as superior led him out of

doors where the monks labored in the fields, he set to work along with them, taking the plough or the fan in his own hands, or forging iron upon the anvil.

He was robust as well as young and handsome; his countenance was infinitely gentle and his conversation amiable. When he was compelled to reprove a fault, he did it with such tender sadness that the culprit felt himself incapable of any new offense which might bring a cloud over the benign brightness of that beloved face. His table was served with the same provisions as that of the monks. He slept in the general dormitory, which he left only five days before his death, then hopelessly ill, to prepare himself in a more solitary place for the last struggle. When he felt his end approaching, he had still strength enough to go down into the garden. Seating himself there, he called to him all his brethren, who wept at the anticipated loss of such a father. Then, with the tenderness which was natural to him, he gave them each a last kiss. The following night (7 March 686) he died, aged thirty-six, whilst the monks were singing matins.

When St. Benedict returned from his last expedition to Rome he found his benefactor, King Egfrid, and his nephew Easterwin, both dead, along with a great number of his monks, carried off by one of the epidemics then so frequent. The only survivors at Jarrow were the abbot and one little scholar, whose fame was destined to eclipse that of all the Saxon saints and kings, who are scarcely known to posterity except by his pen. [This is St. Bede who describes how the abbot and that little boy celebrated alone, and in great sadness, the whole psalms of the monastic service, with no little labor, until new monks arrived.]

St. Benedict Biscop did not lose courage, but promptly collected new subjects under his sway, recommenced and pursued, with his habitual energy, the decoration of his two churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. The monks had already chosen a successor to Easterwin, a deacon named Sigfried, a learned and virtuous man, but affected with lung disease.

St. Benedict's own turn was, however, soon to come. God preserved his life to purify him, and put his patience to a long and cruel trial, before calling him to his eternal recompense. After having



devoted the first thirteen years of his abbacy to the laborious and wandering life so dear to him, and to those distant expeditions which produced so many fruits for his order and country, he was stricken with a cruel disease which lasted for three years, paralyzing all his members one after the other. Though kept to his bed by his infirmity and unable to follow his brethren to the choir, he nevertheless continued to celebrate each service, both day and night, with certain of the monks, mingling his feeble voice with theirs.

At night his sleepless hours were consoled by the reading of the Gospels, the book of Job and other parts of the Holy Scripture, which was kept up without interruption by a succession of priests, to direct his attention away from his bodily suffering and to the hope of better things hereafter. Often, too, he collected the monks and novices round his couch, addressing to them urgent and solemn counsels. Among other things, he begged them to preserve the great library which he had brought from Rome, and not to allow it to be spoiled or dispersed. Above all, he urged them to keep faithfully the rules which, after a careful study of the seventeen principal monasteries which he had visited during his journeys, he had collected for them. He also dwelt much upon the injunction he had already often repeated, that they should pay no attention to high birth in their choice of an abbot, but to look simply to his life and doctrine. "If I had to choose between two evils," said he, "I should prefer to see the spot on which I have established our dear monastery fall back into eternal solitude, rather than to be succeeded here by my own brother

who, we all know, is not in the good way."

The strength of the abbot, and at the same time that of his poor coadjutor, was by this time so exhausted by their respective diseases that they both perceived that they must die, and desired to see each other for the last time before departing from this world. In order that the wish of these two tender friends should be accomplished, it was necessary to bring the dying coadjutor to the bed of the abbot. His head was placed on the same pillow, but they were both so feeble that they could not even embrace one another; the help of brotherly hands was necessary to join their lips.

All the monks assembled in chapter round this bed of suffering and love and the two aged saints, having pointed out among them a successor, approved by all, breathed together, with a short interval between, their last breath. Thus died on 12 January 690, at the age of sixty-two, St. Benedict of England, a worthy rival of the great patriarch of the monks of the West whose robe and name he bore. He died while the monks were singing the night office in church, at the psalm "O God, who is like unto Thee?" which celebrates the final triumph of the faithful soul. He was buried in his church at Wearmouth, before the altar of the blessed Apostle Peter, towards whom his devotion throughout his life had been so constant and true.

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Adapted from S. Baring-Gould, *Lives of the Saints*, vol. I (January) [Edinburgh: John Grant; 1914], with additional material from Richard Stanton, *A Menology of England and Wales* [London: Burns & Oates; 1892]

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**THE 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF THE MONTH OF JANUARY**  
**AFTERFEAST OF HOLY THEOPHANY**  
**COMMEMORATION OF THE HOLY MARTYR TATIANA OF ROME**  
**COMMEMORATION OF OUR VENERABLE FATHER BENEDICT BISCOP,**  
**ABBOT OF WEARMOUTH & JARROW**

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**AT VESPERS**

*On "Lord, I have cried..." , 6 stichera: 3 of the martyr Tatiana (see in the Menaion); and 3 of the venerable one, in Tone VIII: Spec. Mel.: "O all-glorious wonder..." —*

O all-glorious wonder! As the Lord and His apostles traveled to Holy Sion to worship in the

temple of the Lord, so did Benedict journey often unto Rome, to bow down before the shrines of the apostles and to worship at the tombs of the martyrs. Wherefore, receiving grace through their prayers, he sojourneth now in paradise, where with the apostles he joineth chorus before the throne of God.

O all-glorious wonder! He who was devoted to the tombs of the preëminent apostles at Rome, was in Canterbury placed over the Monastery of Saints Peter and Paul; and on returning to the land of his birth, founded the monastery at Wearmouth for Saint Peter, and that at Jarrow on the River Tyne for Saint Paul. O the divine favor of the holy apostles, which they extended to their servant, who now joineth chorus with them before the supernal throne of God.

O all-glorious wonder! Where before men fashioned rude temples of wood and earth, the blessed Benedict constructed churches of quarried and fitted stones, to serve the better for the glory of the Almighty; and he filled them with sacred icons, as witnesses to the incarnation of Christ the Word, and taught monastics to chant melodiously therein the high praises of the King of hosts, the Creator and Maker of all things.

*Glory... of the venerable one: Idiomelon, in Tone V—*

Today heaven and earth exult together, O namesake of blessing: the ranks of angels join chorus on high, and in the heavens the Church Triumphant is filled with splendor, having in its midst thy radiant spirit; and here below the Church Militant, the assembly of the Orthodox, holdeth festival with all due splendor, cherishing thy memory as a priceless treasure, as riches which cannot be taken away, adorning itself with the grace which ever abideth in thee, and unceasingly crying aloud with faith: O venerable father Benedict, entreat Christ the Savior in behalf of our souls!

*Now & ever...: Doxasticon of the feast, in the same tone (see in the Menaion).*

*Aposticha stichera of the feast (see in the Menaion); and Glory... of the venerable one: Idiomelon, in Tone VI—*

Who can describe thy love for thy neighbor, O most holy Benedict? For it is not only in life that by thy words and deeds thou didst guide to the heavenly fold the flock entrusted to thee by God; but from the time of thy repose thou ever leadest us beside the still waters of grace, and dost nurture us on the meadows of Orthodox teachings, and by thy mighty intercessions repellst the assaults of the

soul-destroying wolves, restoring us safely to the embrace of Christ, the Chief Shepherd Who loveth mankind.

*Now & ever...: Doxasticon of the feast, in the same tone (see in the Menaion).*

*Troparion of the martyr (see in the Menaion); Glory..., that of the venerable one, in Tone V—*

O ye faithful, let us magnify the blessed Benedict, the treasury of the wisdom of God, the image of humility and compunction; for, in accordance with his name, he ever filleth our hearts with bliss divine, as a true follower of Christ and minister of His Mysteries.

*Now & ever...: Troparion of the feast.*

## AT MATINS

*At "God is the Lord..." , troparion of the feast, once; that of the martyr; Glory..., that of the venerable one; Now & ever..., that of the feast, once.*

*After the kathismata, the sessional hymns of the feast (see in the Menaion).*

*Canon I of the feast, the composition of Cosmas of Maiuma, with 6 troparia, including the irmos; that of the martyr, with 4 troparia; and that of the venerable one, with 4 troparia, the acrostic whereof is "O Benedict, bestow thy benediction on us", in Tone II—*

## ODE I

*Irmos:* Of old, Thou didst part the waters of the Red Sea with the staff of the law-giver, O Christ, saving the chosen people dryshod, who chanted a hymn of triumph to Thy victorious right hand.

O Christ, Who leddest Thy chosen people dryshod through the waters of the Red Sea, and wast baptized in the waters of the Jordan, grant that I may chant the praises of thy blessed servant.

Blessed in truth was the venerable Benedict, who with his abbot's staff parted the waters of the tumults of this world and led his monks dryshod across to the promised land of dispassion.

Ever do the waters of the sea of life rage with the deadly surgings of tribulations and temptations, O Benedict, but by the rudder of thy staff guide us safely to the calm haven of salvation.



*Theotokion:* Never will our mouths tire of singing thy praises, O Theotokos who didst bear in thine arms Him Who was baptized by John in the Jordan, bringing enlightenment to our benighted race.

### ODE III

*Irmos:* Establish me, O Lord my God, that mine enemy may not boast concerning me; for Thou, O Lord, art my confirmation, my refuge and power.

Establish me in the way of the virtues, O holy one, and lead me unto the kingdom of the Lord, Who is my confirmation, refuge and strength.

Disdaining vainglory, O Benedict, thou didst forsake the royal court, following after the Lord, Who is thy confirmation, refuge and strength.

Inflamed with ardent desire for the knowledge of things divine, the pious Benedict earnestly meditated day and night upon the law of God.

*Theotokion:* Come unto our aid, O Queen, that the enemy of our race may not boast against us; for, after God, thou art our confirmation, refuge and strength.

*Kontakion of the martyr (see in the Menaion); and this kontakion of the venerable one, in Tone III: Spec. Mel.: "Today the Virgin..."—*

Though thy monasteries at Wearmouth and Jarrow were long ago destroyed by the ungodly, the churches which stand there are yet receptacles of grace, O blessed Benedict; and repairing to them with hope, we beg the healing of our infirmities and forgiveness of the transgressions we have committed in our lives.

*Sessional hymn of the martyr (see in the Menaion); and Glory...: sessional hymn of the venerable one, in the same tone (Tone IV) and melody ("Go Thou quickly before..."—*

As thou wast a model of humility and meekness, full of the true knowledge of God, O venerable father Benedict, with fervor thou dost now intercede for the Church of Christ, and prayest without ceasing to Him in behalf of us who celebrate thy feast and honor thy holy memory with love.

*Now & ever...: Sessional hymn of the feast (see in the Menaion).*

### ODE IV

*Irmos:* I hymn Thee, O Lord, for I heard report of Thee, and I was afraid; for Thou comest to me, seeking me who have strayed. Wherefore, I glorify Thy great condescension toward me, O greatly Merciful One.

Thy great zeal for the Lord consuming thy soul, thou didst betake thyself to the great Monastery of Lérins, where thou didst bend thy neck in holy obedience, receiving the angelichabit, O wondrous Benedict.

By thy reverent conduct thou didst show that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, O venerable father; for thou gavest no sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids, until thou hadst mastered the rules of piety.

Ever yearning for the Jerusalem on high, on earth thou didst journey often as a pilgrim to Rome, to bow down in prayer at the tombs of the apostles and martyrs, O saint of God, blessing Him for His great mercy.

*Theotokion:* Save us, O Mother of God, to whom all men were entrusted as thy children when thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, was nailed to the tree of the Cross; for thy maternal boldness before Him doth free us from adversity.

### ODE V

*Irmos:* Dispelling the gloom of dark ignorance, O Christ God Who art life and light, illumine our thoughts, our noetic senses, with the never-waning light of Thine understanding.

Taking up the lamp of divine knowledge, O Benedict, thou didst lift it high, dispelling all the darkness of thy countrymen's ignorance with the pure light of understanding.

On material treasures thou didst not set thy heart, preferring instead the spiritual riches of theology and the lustrous grace of sacred relics and holy icons, O blessed one.

With the venerable Adrian, O saint, thou didst escort the holy hierarch Theodore when he journeyed to his new flock, like Barnabas and Silas who traveled with the Apostle Paul.

*Theotokion:* Thee do we implore, who languish betimes in gloom and shadow, our senses darkened by sins and iniquities, that thou lead us forth into the never-waning light of thy Son, O Virgin.

## ODE VI

*Irmos:* Stuck fast am I in the abyss of sin, O Savior, and tempest-tossed on the deep of life; yet lead me up from the passions and save me, as Thou didst Jonah from the sea monster.

Having parted from the tombs of the holy apostles, O Benedict, thou didst journey to the Kingdom of Kent, where thou wast given charge of the Monastery of Saints Peter and Paul.

Ye who love the saints of God, join chorus today in jubilation, celebrating with rejoicing and gladness the virtues of the venerable Benedict, the true namesake of blessedness.

Bemired in the pit of sin, we call in prayer upon the holy Benedict, entreating his aid, that we may be delivered from the carnal passions and the temptations of the devil.

*Theotokion:* Every Christian crieth out, O Mistress, beseeching thee to extend thy helping hand; for if thou wilt not draw us forth from the deep, the monsters of the abyss will surely devour us.

*Kontakion & ikos of the feast (see in the Menaion).*

## ODE VII

*Irmos:* The three youths, cast into the flaming furnace, danced together in chorus; and delighting in Christ, as in a meadow of incorruption, they cried, chanting: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou in Thy temple!

Northumbria's king bestowed upon thee lands at Wearmouth, whereon to establish a monastic house, O Benedict; and there thou didst teach pious men to chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou in Thy temple!

Eagerly desiring a church fit for the worship of Christ, O venerable one, thou didst hire stonecutters from the land of the Franks, to build an edifice wherein to chant: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou in Thy temple!

Dedicating church and monastery to the preëminent Apostle, O father, therein thou didst teach all the doctrines of piety, edifying thy land, that men might chant in Orthodox fashion: O God of our fathers, blessed art Thou in Thy temple!

*Theotokion:* In his stately church the venerable Benedict set up a magnificent icon of thee, O all-

immaculate one, that all, venerating it, might render thee due honor, chanting: O Mother of God, blessed art thou among women!

## ODE VIII

*Irmos:* Thou didst set the foundation of the earth in the beginning, O Lord, and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. All creation hymneth Thee, and in its words glorifieth Thy works forever.

Charity, with faith and hope, filled thy God-bearing soul, O Benedict, and filleth the whole Church with awe and wonder, so that, lifting up its voice, it glorifieth thee and thy Creator forever.

Thy foundation in Wearmouth labored so well for Christ the Lord, O saint, that the king enabled thee to establish another at Jarrow, nigh unto it, wherein also to glorify the works of God forever.

In his love for the divine liturgy, the holy Benedict prevailed upon the holy hierarch Agatho to send from Rome a skilled precentor and chanter, to teach the English monks to glorify God fittingly.

Of the fruits produced by thy labors in the vineyard of the Lord, the greatest was Bede the Venerable, in whom the Master was well-pleased; and with thee in heaven he glorifieth the works of God forever.

*Theotokion:* Neither angelic voice in heaven above, nor human tongue on earth, is worthy to sing thy supernal glory, O all-holy Mother of the Creator of all; yet do we strive to glorify thee as is meet forever.

## ODE IX

*Irmos:* Thee do we magnify, O blessed and most pure Theotokos, who through thy virgin womb ineffably didst make God incarnate, the Luminary Who shone forth before the sun and hath come to us in the flesh.

On a bed of affliction did the venerable one lie for three years, unable to move, and in great pain; yet did he ever strive to chant the praises of Christ, Who shone forth upon mankind from the Virgin's womb.

Now let us all laud the virtues of Benedict the God-bearer, who shone forth in piety more brightly than the sun, and whose holy memory filleth with



the warmth of grace those frozen in the ice of indifference.

Unto the renowned Monasteries of Thorney and Glastonbury were thy sacred relics borne, O Benedict, to save them from evildoers and the blasphemous; and like gems they shone for all with the luster of grace divine.

*Theotokion*: Speak but the word to thy Son, the incarnate God, O blessed Mother of the Creator, and in His love for thee He will do all that thou wilt ask, as of old He heeded thine entreaty at the wedding of Cana in Galilee.

*Exapostilarion of the venerable one: Spec. Mel.*: “*The heaven with stars...*”—

O Creator of all, Who bearest Thy saints up into heaven as upon clouds, by thy favored one, the blessed Benedict, save us who magnify him.

*Glory... Now & ever...: Exapostilarion of the feast (see in the Menaion).*

*Aposticha stichera of the feast (see in the Menaion), and Glory...: of the venerable one, idiomelon, in the same tone (Tone VI)* —

Come, ye Christians of these latter times, and though lacking in all zeal and every virtue, let us praise the venerable Benedict, the namesake of blessedness, who, having toiled unceasingly for his Master, hath received from Him the promised reward for his faithful service, and dwelleth now in the habitations of the just, whence he sendeth aid upon the wretched and afflicted, and by his mediation obtaineth for us the remission of sins and great mercy.

*Now & ever...: Doxasticon of the feast (see in the Menaion).*

### AT LITURGY

*On the Beatitudes, 6 troparia from Ode VII of the festal canon.*

*Prokimenon of the feast, and that of the venerable one, in Tone VII*—

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.

### EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS, §213

[GAL 5:22-6:2]

Brethren: The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye who are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

*Alleluia of the feast, and that of the venerable one, in Tone VI*—

*Stichos*: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord; in His commandments shall he greatly delight.

### GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE, §24

[LK 6:17-23]

At that time, Jesus stood in the plain, and the company of His disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judæa and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him, and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch Him: for there went virtue out of Him, and healed them all. And He lifted up His eyes on His disciples, and said: “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye who hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye who weep now: for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven.”

*Communion verse of the feast, and that of the venerable one*—

In everlasting remembrance shall the righteous be; he shall not be afraid of evil tidings

## THE LAST JUDGMENT

*St. John of Shanghai & San Francisco*

The day of the Last Judgment! That day no one knows — only God the Father knows — but its signs are given in the Gospel and in the Apocalypse of the holy Apostle John the Theologian. Revelation speaks of the events at the end of the world and of the Last Judgment primarily in images and in a veiled manner, but the holy fathers have explained these images, and there is an authentic Church tradition that speaks clearly concerning the signs of the approach of the end, and concerning the Last Judgment.

Before the end of life on earth there will be agitation, wars, civil war, hunger, earthquakes.... Men will suffer from fear, will die from expectation of calamity. There will be no life, no joy of life, but a tormented state of falling away from life. But there will be a falling away not only from life, but from faith also, and when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth? [Lk 18:8]. Men will become proud, ungrateful, rejecting Divine law. Together with the falling away from life will be also a weakening of moral life. There will be an exhaustion of good and an increase of evil.

Of these times the holy Apostle John the Theologian speaks in his God-inspired work, the Apocalypse. He himself says that he “was in the Spirit” when he wrote it: this means that the Holy Spirit Himself was in him when under the form of various images the fate of the Church and the world was opened to him; and so this is a Divine Revelation.

The Apocalypse represents the fate of the Church in the image of a woman who hides herself in those times in the wilderness: she does not show herself in public life; as today in Russia. In public life the leading role will be played by forces which prepare the possibility for the appearance of Antichrist.

Antichrist will be a man, and not the devil incarnate. “Anti” means “old,” and it also signifies “in place of” or “against.” Antichrist is a man who desires to be in place of Christ, to occupy His place and possess what Christ should possess: he desires to possess the attraction of Christ and authority over the whole world. And Antichrist will receive

that authority before his destruction and the destruction of the world.

What is known of this man — Antichrist? His precise ancestry is unknown: his father is completely unknown, and his mother a foul pretended virgin. He will be a Jew of the tribe of Dan. He will be very intelligent and endowed with skill in handling people. He will be fascinating and kind. The philosopher Vladimir Soloviev worked long at presenting the advent and person of Antichrist. He made careful use of all material on this question, not only Patristic but also Moslem, and he worked out a brilliant picture.

Before the advent of Antichrist there is already being prepared in the world the possibility of his appearance: The mystery of iniquity doth already work [II Thess 2:7]. The forces preparing for his appearance fight above all against the lawful Imperial authority. The holy Apostle Paul says that Antichrist cannot be manifested until what withholdeth be taken away [II Thess 2:6-7]. St. John Chrysostom explains that the “withholding one” is the lawful pious authority: such an authority fights with evil. For this reason the “mystery”, already at work in the world, fights with this authority; it desires a lawless authority. When the “mystery” decisively achieves that authority, nothing will any longer hinder the appearance — of Antichrist.

Fascinating, intelligent, kind, he will be merciful — he will act with mercy and goodness; but not for the sake of mercy and goodness, but for the strengthening of his authority. And when he will have strengthened it to the point where the whole world acknowledges him, then he will reveal his face.

For his capital he will choose Jerusalem, because it was here that the Savior revealed His Divine teaching and His person, and it was here that the entire world was called to the blessedness of goodness and salvation. But the world did not acknowledge Christ and crucified Him in Jerusalem; under Antichrist, however, the whole world will acknowledge his authority, and Jerusalem will become the capital of the world.



Having attained the pinnacle of authority, Antichrist will demand of men the acknowledgement that he has attained what no earthly power had ever attained and none can attain, and he will demand worship of himself as a higher being, as a god.

Soloviev well describes the character of his activity as “Supreme Ruler”. He will do what is pleasing to all — on the condition of being recognized as Supreme Authority. He will allow the Church to exist, will permit her Divine services, will promise to build magnificent churches — on the condition that all recognize him as “Supreme Being” and worship him. Antichrist will have a personal hatred for Christ; he will see in Him a rival and look upon Him as a personal enemy. He will live by this hatred and rejoice in men’s apostasy from Christ.

Under Antichrist there will be an immense falling away from the faith. Many bishops will change in faith and in justification will point to the brilliant situation of the Church. The search for compromise will be the characteristic disposition of men. Straightforwardness of confession will disappear. Men will cleverly justify their fall, and gracious evil will support such a general disposition. There will be in men the habit of apostasy from truth, and the sweetness of compromise and sin.

Antichrist will allow men everything, as long as they “fall down and worship him;” and the whole world will submit to him. And then there will appear the two righteous men, who will fearlessly preach the faith and accuse Antichrist. According to Church tradition they are the two prophets of the Old Testament, Elijah and Enoch, who did not taste of death, but will taste it now for three days; and in three days they must rise. Their death will call forth the great rejoicing of Antichrist and his servants. Their resurrection will plunge them into great confusion and terror. And then will come the end of the world.

The Apostle Peter says that the first world was made out of water — an image of the primordial chaos, and perished by water — in the Flood. And now the world is reserved unto fire. The earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up [II Peter 3:5-7, 10]. All the elements will ignite.

This present world will perish in a single instant. In an instant all will be changed.

And the Sign of the Son of God will appear: the Sign of the Cross.

The whole world, having willingly submitted to Antichrist, will weep. Everything is finished forever: Antichrist killed; the end of his kingdom of warfare with Christ; the end, and one is held accountable; one must answer to the true God.

“The end of the world” signifies not the annihilation of the world, but its transformation. Everything will be transformed suddenly, in the twinkling of an eye. The dead will rise in new bodies: their own, but renewed, just as the Savior rose in His own body and on it were traces of wounds from the nails and spear, yet it possessed new faculties, and in this sense it was a new body. It is not clear whether this new body will be such as that with which Adam was made, or whether it will be an entirely new body.

And the Lord will appear in glory on the clouds. Trumpets will sound, and loud, with power! They will sound in the soul and conscience! All will become clear to the human conscience. The Prophet Daniel, speaking of the Last Judgment, relates how the Ancient of Days, the Judge, sits on His throne, and before Him is a fiery stream [Daniel 7:9-10]. Fire is a purifying element; it burns sin. Woe to a man if sin has become a part of his nature: then the fire will burn the man himself.

This fire will be kindled within a man: seeing the Cross, some will rejoice, but others will fall into confusion, terror, and despair. Thus will men be divided instantly. The very state of a man’s soul casts him to one side or the other, to right or to left.

The more consciously and persistently a man strives toward God in his life, the greater will be his joy when he hears: “Come unto Me, ye blessed.” And conversely: the same words will call the fire of horror and torture on those who did not desire Him, who fled and fought or blasphemed Him during their lifetime!

The Last Judgment knows of no witnesses or written protocols! Everything is inscribed in the souls of men and these records, these “books”, are opened at the Judgment. Everything becomes clear to all and to oneself.

And some will go to joy, while others — to horror.

When “the books are opened,” it will become clear that the roots of all vices lie in the human soul. Here is a drunkard or a lecher: when the body has died, some may think that sin is dead too. No! There was an inclination to sin in the soul, and that sin was sweet to the soul, and if the soul has not repented of the sin and has not freed itself from it, it will come to the Last Judgment also with the same desire for sin. It will never satisfy that desire and in

that soul there will be the suffering of hatred. It will accuse everyone and everything in its tortured condition, it will hate everyone and everything. “There will be gnashing of teeth” of powerless malice and the unquenchable fire of hatred.

A “fiery gehenna” — such is the inner fire. “Here there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” Such is the state of hell.

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## A WORD ON ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

*St. Philaret of New York*

In the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. On this day, when the Church glorifies the great righteous one — the honorable, glorious Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of our Lord John, as the Savior of the world Himself said, “among those that are born of women there is not one greater than he” — on this day I would like to draw your attention to one event in the life of our Savior, which directly concerns the holy John the Baptist.

The Holy Gospel says that John, when he was already in bonds, in prison, sent his disciples to the Savior, so that on his behalf they would ask the Savior the question: “Art Thou the One Who has come, or are we to await another?” In other words, art Thou the One Who was supposed to come (implying, of course, the Messiah, the Savior of the world), or should we await someone else, *i.e.*, not Thou?

This question being asked by the disciples on behalf of their holy teacher could evoke such thoughts within a person’s mind, as supposedly John, who at one time was so convinced in witnessing to the divine worthiness of the Lamb of God, taking the sin of the world upon Himself, and then suddenly grew doubtful. A certain theologian directly made the supposition that John fell under a tremendous temptation in prison: when he imagined before himself his entire course of prophetic ministry, suddenly he doubted, thinking, maybe this is not the Messiah, and all that I did,

could it have been in vain? Indeed, such a thought could emerge from such a question.

But such an explanation does not coincide at all with what the Savior Himself said, after the disciples of John left. When they asked Him their question, says the Gospel, the Lord said to them: “Go and tell John what you saw and heard.” “Tell him about the miracles,” says the Savior; “the lepers are cleansed, to the poor the Gospel is preached and the dead are raised up.” They were to inform their teacher of all these miracles. But in order that this instruction may not be understood as being intended for John himself, the Lord later says to those who were with him: “What did you go to see in the wilderness? Was it a reed, shaken by the wind?” A response was unnecessary. The mighty Prophet and Forerunner of the Lord was so unlike a reed shaken by the wind in his firmness and steadfastness, that an answer was unnecessary — it was inferred with doubtlessness. “What did you go to see there?” the Lord asks on. “Was it a man dressed in soft raiment?” (That is, someone who lives in the usual way, as do many.) “No, such are to be found in kings’ palaces,” says the Lord. And again, no answer was necessary. Everyone understood and knew John.

And then the Lord finally says, “What did you go to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, even more than a prophet.” Here, the Lord indicated that “he is the voice crying in the wilderness, of whom the ancient prophet spoke;” and then He said: “Among



those who are born of woman there is none greater than John the Baptist.” These words, through which the Lord affirmed the authority and the spiritual height of His Baptist, who at one time had borne witness to Him, absolutely preclude that explanation which I mentioned just before (that supposedly John fell into doubt). At this point, the Lord points out his firmness, steadfastness and loftiness. And as is noted by St. John Chrysostom, who so subtly and profoundly understood the holy Gospel, the question was posed not for John, but for his disciples.

The wise instructor — St. John the Baptist, saw that his disciples were doubting and wavering. And besides that, the Holy Gospel gives us cause to presume with undoubting conviction that they had their own sort of zeal for their own teacher. For at one time John had been the highest authority — when his preaching suddenly thundered out, when the “voice of one crying in the wilderness over the waters of the Jordan” thundered out. And the Savior of the world Himself received the first witness from John. And later, as the Evangelist John says, there was a moment when the disciples of John came to him and said to their teacher John: “Rabbi, here is the One Who was with you, to Whom you bore witness; He is now baptizing and everyone is going to Him” (no longer coming to you). Here we see a clear hint of that sincere, but unwise zeal for the glory of their teacher.

In the aforementioned case, we see how the Lord, on His part, bore witness to His Baptist, as one “greatest among those born of women.”

Today we celebrate together the memory of St. John the Baptist. On the feast of the Severing of the Head of John the Baptist, in the prokimenon (that is the fundamental verse expressing the main thought of the feast), the Church proclaims: “The righteous rejoice in the Lord and hope in Him.” This directly pertains to John the Baptist, when he he was already in prison and his head was to be severed.”

It means, that John had no doubts whatsoever, but he, as a righteous one rejoiced in his Lord even

when such a violent death befell him, brought on him by King Herod who had mindlessly promised half his kingdom. Let us remember this.

How steadfast was John the Baptist everywhere, at all times, and in all things! And it is precisely this example of his steadfastness which must particularly now encourage faithful people. How many temptations there are these days! Temptations to sin are themselves scattered throughout, but one can repent for sin. But there are different temptations — those of spiritual fakery, spiritual counterfeit, untrue churches, and so on, which are likewise spread out everywhere — this is most terrifying. And it is in this regard that a person must be stoic, steadfast and brave, and must not step away from standing in the Truth.

Thanks be to God, we belong to that Church, which in holiness preserves Orthodox statutes and traditions and the entire structure of life which Orthodox people must have. Let us thank God for this.

How many people there are these days, who sincerely seek the Truth, and yet they have become lost and found themselves on the wrong path. One must have compassion on them and pray for them, and not judge them, as some do today. There are many people who seek salvation, but the enemy derails them and pushes them onto an incorrect path, where they think they will see the true church, but where in fact there are only counterfeits and fakery.

At one time the Lord said in the Book of Revelation to His faithful one: “Hold fast that which thou hast.” And the Lord directs this voice to us also through his Seer of Mysteries: “Hold fast that which thou hast.”

Give thanks to God that you belong to the true Church and value this gift of His mercy more than anything else. And as He is always faithful to his promises, likewise you also be faithful to Him until the end, for He says in that same Book of Revelation: “Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.” Amen.

## THE SYNAXIS OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST WHICH THE CHURCH CELEBRATES ON THE 7<sup>TH</sup> OF JANUARY

Today, we celebrate the Synaxis of the great Forerunner, John the Baptist, for he ministered in the mystery of the Lord's baptism, and this has been observed by our forefathers. In consequence, this holy day is numbered among the other feasts of Saint John the Baptist, so that none of his marvelous and supernatural gifts may remain hidden. The translation of the sacred hand of St. John coincided with the eve of Theophany and reached Constantinople in the following manner:

It is recorded that this sacred relic of St. John the Baptist was buried in the city of Sebaste. The evangelist St. Luke visited that site, taking the right hand of the prophet, and bringing it to his home in Antioch, where it worked numerous miracles, one of which is the following:

In the outskirts of Antioch, there lurked a dragon which the idolaters had deified and honored annually with human sacrifices. One year, the lot fell on a certain Christian to offer his daughter to the dragon. It was a fearful sight to behold as it came out of its cave, opening its mouth, devouring and crushing the sacrificial victim in its jaws.

The father of the maiden prayed to God and the divine Baptist with tears and sighs to rescue his country from that dreadful scourge. As he entreated God, he conceived the following plan (for he who is in dire need easily finds a way out). He asked permission to venerate the sacred hand of the Baptist, and while he kissed it, he bit off the thumb with his teeth and, accomplishing this, he stole out of the temple unnoticed. When the day of his daughter's sacrifice arrived, a great multitude assembled as the father drew near with the girl before the dragon. When the dragon opened its jaws to devour his only daughter, the father pitched the sacred thumb of the Forerunner into its mouth and — lo, the miracle! — the dragon fell dead on the spot. After this, the father took his daughter and



returned to his house, joyously proclaiming the miracle to everyone. The multitudes witnessing this event were astonished, and they thanked the Lord and the Baptist with all their hearts. They erected a splendid church with superb design and ornament to the Forerunner.

It is said that on the feast of the Holy Cross (September 14), the sacred hand of the Baptist would rise at times, flexing or clenching its fingers. By these intermittent signs, future happiness or misfortune was foreseen. For this reason, many sovereigns desired to possess this priceless treasure, especially Constantine (A.D. 912), and Romanus (A.D. 959). When they governed the empire of the Romans, they secured the sacred hand through a deacon named Job. According to Christian tradition, on the eve of Holy Theophany, the waters are sanctified. Hence, the God-loving Emperor Constantine venerated the hand with great respect and treasured it in his royal palace. The Synaxis of St. John takes place in the Phorakion.

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## **ST. JAMES OF KYROS IN SYRIA**

### **WHOM THE CHURCH CELEBRATES ON THE 6TH OF FEBRUARY**

James, our holy father and ascetic, was a native of Kyros. His life was handed down to us by the erudite Bishop Theodoretus of Kyros, who recorded many other biographies of saints and martyrs. One of the wonderful lives he wrote is that of St. James, with whom he spoke many times and some of whose extraordinary accomplishments he witnessed. In this concise style therefore he recorded our saint's life:

Since we have written down the various deeds and virtues of many saints, together with their feats and supreme accomplishments, let us speak about those who, still alive, strive to surpass others and imitate the angels, though they are still in the flesh. Such is the exceptional and renowned James, whom not only I, but many others, have had the good fortune of seeing; these can attest that I write nothing beyond the truth, but rather, less. For all good servants of God conceal their virtues as much as possible, in order to avoid human admiration.

The present James, the stouthearted one, surpassed even the ancient fathers in abstinence, for each one abhorred each and every bodily comfort and did not wish to partake here of any type of pleasure. He had no form of shelter; neither a house, a hut nor a cave. He went through his entire life without a roof over his head, having the heavens as shelter, and thus enduring all the violent winds and the blazing sun, as well as the rains and snow. He persevered in all these conditions as if he struggled with a body other than his own and strove by sheer will power to overcome the nature of the body.

At first when he departed, he enclosed himself in a very small hut, thus freeing his soul from all exterior noise and commotion; he affixed his mind in remembrance of God and meditated on His statutes. After he had been sequestered like this for a while, he became inured to these afflictions and strivings and dared to attempt even greater hardships.

To this end, he ascended a small and obscure mountain about 3.4 miles from Kyros; he made it

famous and majestic. This mountain received so much blessing from God because of our saint, that people take its soil to benefit body and soul. On that mountain strove the superb James, having, as I said earlier, neither a cell, a tent, or hut, or any other form of shelter. Whether he prayed, sat, rested, or stood, whether healthy or sick, he was always without a roof over his head. Wherefore, from these extreme hardships, he fell ill and lay there in dire pain.

When I learned this, I went to visit him as a friend, for I knew him. It is now fourteen years since, but it was summer then: the sun was hot, for there was no breeze at all. He seemed to suffer from a bad gall bladder. As I saw his extreme suffering and endurance, I was astonished. Even then, while the resulting fever tormented him within and the unbearable heat of the sun scorched him without, he was totally exposed to the elements; he would not permit us to build him a small hut. Meanwhile, a great multitude of people gathered to take his relics away in the event that he passed away.

When I observed his worsening condition, I tried a certain artifice to bring him a little comfort and said to him, "I would like to remain here as a member of your brotherhood, but I cannot endure the scorching of the sun, and my head is aching. So, if you permit me, I will build a small hut to cover myself."

Then he ordered certain people to stick canes and reeds into the earth and cover the top with thin planks. He bade me go underneath the shade of that hut so the sun would not burn me, but I said to him, "I am ashamed to have comfort, since I am in good health and younger than yourself, and you, who are ailing and my senior, burn in the sun. Therefore, if you wish my company, come under the shade with me."

Then he consented to this and came under the shelter. After we had conversed over various matters, I put my hand on his back and noticed that he wore heavy iron chains underneath his garments. He wore one chain about his waist as a belt, two

others crosswise in front and back, and others on his arms and neck. I begged him to take these off, saying, "O venerable Father, the fever that simmers within you is sufficient; therefore, do not torture your body without. When the illness has passed, do as you wish."

So as not to appear disobedient, the all-wise one consented also to this. Within a few days he recovered, but later he turned ill again.

This time it was worse than before. A great multitude gathered again, not only from the villages, but from the city as well, in the event that he reposed. A violent quarrel developed between the city folk and the rural population over who would take possession of his relics. After a while, he was quietly placed on a wooden bed and brought to the city. Of this, he knew nothing, for he felt nothing. He was placed in the Church of Saint Elias.

After three days, he regained consciousness, and asking where he was, James became scandalized when he realized that he had been taken from the mountain. He ordered those standing by to take him back to his place of solitude, and they obeyed so that he would not grieve. After they carried him there, they cooked a little porridge for him to eat and gain strength. But he did not wish to break his rule and eat cooked food (for he never ate anything boiled or cooked); it was only with difficulty that they made him eat.

His endurance was such that many times when it snowed, he prayed continually for three days, face down, totally buried in the snow so that people had to dig him out with shovels. For all these pains, he was made worthy of divine grace to do various miracles. He cured many sick people and drove out demons. The wondrous one even resurrected the dead, such as the young boy who was known in the countryside.

The boy's parents lived here in the suburb of the city. They had given birth to many children, but these all died, either in infancy or at a very young age. When they gave birth to their last child, they hastened to the saint and besought him to pray and to make the child live for many years, and they would dedicate him to God, as was proper. But when the boy reached his fourth year, he died. The father was not home at the time of his death. But

when he returned and saw his son's body lying on a bed, about to be taken to the grave, he lifted it from the bier. He ran to the saint and laid his dead body at his feet, saying that he did not wish to lie, having made a vow to God.

The saint then fell on his knees and prayed, entreating Almighty God to raise the dead boy. Towards evening, he heard the child crying, and the saint arose, glorifying the benevolent God, Who had hearkened to his prayer and had resurrected the boy. I myself witnessed this miracle with my own eyes, and I wrote it down for the benefit of all.

Hearken now and you shall learn about more of the thrice-blessed one's accomplishments, as he himself narrated them to me. He said:

1. "When I left the world and came to the desert to be a monk, I saw a gigantic Ethiopian, with fiery eyes. I was so frightened by him that every time I saw him I would stop eating and begin to pray, for he usually appeared to me the ninth hour, when I ate. Thus I stayed for ten days without eating at all. At last, I defied his threats and began to eat. He approached me with a staff and tried to strike me, but I said to him, "If you have authority from God to kill me, I am ready. If not, why do you toil in vain, O powerless one?" After hearing this, he vanished. But again he attempted to oust me from here in a different manner.

Many times he assumed my appearance. He took the water that my novice was bringing to me and sent him back to where he came from. Then later he spilt the water out. Meanwhile, fifteen days passed, and I was parched from thirst. So I asked the novice why he did not bring me water, and he said that I met him on the way and removed the earthen jug from his shoulders. Then I ordered him not to give me the water jug until he brought it here to its place.

When the demon saw that this attempt was also in vain, he tried another one. He threatened me saying, "I will give you such a foul stench that no one will be able to approach you because of it."

I answered him in turn that he would do me a benevolent deed for if no one approached me, I would be more able to concentrate on divine things.



2. A few days later, I saw two women coming toward me. At first I was scandalized, so I cast rocks at them to make them leave. But then I remembered that it was the devil, so I said a prayer and the women disappeared.

3. At another time, the demon was transformed into a young boy with adorned, golden hair. He flattered me with gestures and tempted me with unimaginable cajolery. Therefore, in anger, I ordered him to disappear from the face of God, and not to tempt His servants. He left, not bearing to hear the divine name.

The demons tried many other schemes against the saint, but I will not mention them, for the sake of brevity, that I may record a certain benefaction God rendered me through the prayers of His holy servant, for it would be a sin, and I would be ungrateful, if I did not mention the assistance that He granted me.

Here in the vicinity of Kyros, the devious Marcion sowed many thorns of his aberration, which I, as bishop of the city, tried to pull out, without augmenting this infamous heresy. Some who were deeply rooted in that heresy used sorcery and satanic snares in their assaults against me. One night, I heard a voice, and the devil said to me in the Syrian dialect, "O Theodoretus, why do you oppose Marcion? He never did any harm to you. Put an end to the hostility and dissolve the strife. Otherwise, you will certainly repent later, to no avail. I would have destroyed you long ago, if you did not have the aid and protection of James."

After I heard this, I asked an acquaintance who was lying next to me at the time if he had heard all this. He said he had. So we arose and looked about, but saw no one. Then I knew the meaning of what was said. I was wearing then the old cowl of the great James, and it was stronger than diamonds or the sturdiest helmet; that is why the demons feared me. I sent an appeal to the saint to make an entreaty to the Lord on my behalf, so that the attempts of the evil one would not harm me. He replied, "Do not worry, my friend, for all those schemes have been dissolved as if they were a spider's web, as our Lord revealed to me this night. For when I began to sing hymns, I observed a gigantic and fearsome serpent

coming out of the villages, those that are inhabited by the heretics, and it was running from west to east. I then said a prayer and the serpent wrapped its tail around its head; dividing into two parts and vanished as smoke." The saint foresaw all these things, and later it all came to pass. Not only did the followers of Marcion who were in the aforesaid villages — ready to slay us with their swords — not harm us, but by the guidance of divine grace they also returned to the Orthodox faith.

Therefore, when I became aware of this divine assistance, I went to thank the blessed one for such a great benefit that his prayer had brought me. We conversed for a long time, and I asked his permission to leave. I asked him to pray to God for me that He would totally uproot from my flock the heresy of Marcion, as there were still to be found some remnants of this perversion. He answered me, "You need neither me nor anyone else to intercede for you, as you have an intercessor in the great John the Baptist."

When I heard this, I was most glad and asked him to explain the matter to me, so that I might be assured. He answered: "When you brought from Phoenicia and Palestine the honorable relics, I had doubts whether or not they were those of the divine Baptist or of some other martyr named John. The following night as I prayed, I saw a young man clothed in white, and he said to me, 'Why did you not greet us, as did the others, O brother James?' I asked him who they were and when they arrived, and he said, 'The day before yesterday, we came from Phoenicia and Palestine, and everyone greeted us: the hierarch and the entire populace of both the city and the suburbs; and only *you* did not honor us.' (He probably said this because I had doubts in me.)

"I said to him, 'Forgive me for not coming, but I always honor you, and I worship the God of all and revere Him.' Not only did I see that vision then, but afterwards, when you were going to the villages to punish the insurgents and pleaded with me to entreat God for you, I prayed all that night that He would give you help. As I was supplicating, I heard a voice saying, 'Have no fear, James, for St. John the Baptist entreats for Theodoretus, and if he did not intercede for him, he would have suffered



much harm from the malice of the demons.” Thus said the great James, and he encouraged me to have no doubts, nor to have any other intercessors, for I had the great Forerunner.

Certain people erected a church to this St. James while he was still alive, desiring after his translation from this life to keep part of his relics. Likewise, I also constructed a precious chest for his relics in the Church of the Holy Apostles. But the saint, having learned of this, bade me to bury him on the mountain. I promised him that I would fulfill his wish. So after I carved a stone sepulcher, I brought it to the mountain, and constructed a small house, so that it would not be exposed to the air. Upon seeing the tomb, the saint said to me, “I do not wish that tomb to be called mine, but rather, the Holy Martyrs’. You will bury me next to them in another tomb, so that I, the unworthy one, may be next to them.” After this, I did as he said, assembling many relics of holy prophets, apostles and martyrs, and placed them in that tomb as the all-prudent one requested, so as to avoid vainglory.

Oftentimes, people would come from afar and bother the saint during prayer, and he usually sent them away sorrowing. They turned away disappointed, for he did not receive them happily, to bless them as he should. I advised him not to turn people away, but rather to speak to them kindly so that they would not be scandalized. He answered, “Just as it is not proper for a servant to leave while

his master is talking with him and go speak with his fellow servants — the master is angered and punishes that servant — so it is improper, when we are praying to God, to leave Him, the exceedingly honored King of all Creation, in order to speak amongst ourselves. We anger Him instead of pleasing Him, and He justly punishes us.”

Thus, we have written with brevity. And because the divine James is still in this life, if he performs any other miracles, let him write them, whosoever wishes, to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ; to Whom glory, honor, and power is meet, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and evermore, and unto the ages of ages. Amen. Through the intercessions of the holy saints, Christ God, have mercy upon us. Amen.

Thus writes the celebrated Theodoretus. The latter was still alive when he wrote the present life of St. James. He finished the way of his austerity, having obtained great honors here from all pious Christians, and there in the heavenly Kingdom, he was crowned by the Giver of rewards, Christ, with the unfading laurel of asceticism.

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